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Santiago as a Motivational Hero in Context of Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*

Abstract : Ernest Hemingway is a famous name of American literature. And his Noble Prize winning novel *The Old Man and the Sea* is a story of an old Santiago and his struggle. He represents all human race through his courageous action in troublesome situations. How does he handle all adversities? When Santiago brings marlin on the shore he finds that he has only marlin's skeleton and marlin's body fully attacked by sharks. And he loses his winning fight and prize and now his prize is worthless for him. But he faces this merciless misfortune with great calm and dignity, because he has perseverance and other qualities and these qualities make him different and admirable for all. And present research paper also an attempt to explore those qualities of an old Santiago, which makes him motivational hero.

Keywords - Old Man, Salao, Sharks, Marlin, Sea, Dignity, Motivation

Introduction

Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time.” -Thomas A. Edison

Ernest Hemingway's novel, *The Old Man and the Sea* has been considered as a great literary masterpiece. He won Pulitzer Prize in 1953 and the world's most famous and honourable, the Nobel Prize for literature in 1954 for his masterpiece *The Old Man and the Sea*. This short fiction is a most remarkable and inspiring piece of literature, which belongs to every generation and fit in the frame of every age group reader's taste.

Hero of the novel 'Santiago' is an old man by profession, he is a fisherman. *The Old Man and the Sea* is an epic narrative of his benevolent courage. His story motivates and inspires the reader to set the examples by setting goal and doing efforts at the last bit of life to achieve that goal.

Motivation is a tool and instrument through which anyone can achieve his goal. Motivation is essential skill for life to survive, to cope with lots of problems and adverse situations. Motivation and inspiration gives strength to human being to live his life gracefully and have purpose to do great things in the life to help others. "Motivation is generally considered to be an internal state that initiates and maintains goal directed behaviour" (Mayer, 2011).

In the present novel we see that throughout the whole story novelist, Hemingway is given heroic proportions to old man. He is a strange old man, still powerful and wise in all the ways of his action. He seems to be larger than life and as old as time as Hemingway portrays him which shows Santiago's inner strength:

The blotches ran well down the sides of his face and his hands had the deep-creased scars from handling heavy fish on the cords. But none of these scars were fresh. They were as old as erosions in a fishless desert (Hemingway, 2004; OMS: 3).

The Old Man and the Sea is an instance of mankind, depicting man's life as a struggle against unbeatable natural forces, a struggle in which through dignity and endurance the old man, Santiago is won a kind of victory in defeat. From the very beginning of the

novel he is trapped and indulges in long lasting struggle with natural forces. He has been called a “Salao, which is the worst form of unlucky” (OMS: 3), because he has been without a fish for eighty-four days. And his companion, a boy called Manolin has been forced by his parents to leave him. Even his sail is patched with flour-sacks and when furled around the mast it looks like the flag of permanent defeat but he is still hopeful to catch a big fish and has light of hope in his eyes as Hemingway describe:

The sail was patched with flour sacks and, furled, it looked like the flag of permanent defeat (OMS: 3).

Everything about him was old except his eyes and they were the same colour as the sea and were cheerful and undefeated (OMS: 4).

Physically Santiago was old but by heart and action he was matchless he has strong willpower and endurance to defeat any hurdle. He never complains and always tries to concentrate on goal to achieve it but with courage, dignity, honesty and kindness. When he said:

Only I have no luck any more. But who knows? Maybe today. Every day is a new day. It is better to be lucky. But I would rather be exact. Then when luck comes you are ready. (OMS: 22)

After eight-four days, finally he hooks a really very big fish named marlin with hooking marlin his struggle and battle starts first with marlin for recognize her and second for saving big fish from sharks. He is alone but confident and full of courage to endure pain. He struggled alone in the midst of the sea hour after hour and day after day and night. Even tolerate heat of the day and cold of the night and his hand is bleeding. He shifts the weight of the line on his left shoulder and kneeling carefully he washes his wounded hand in the ocean and keeps it in water for more than a minute for relief and he said, “And pain does not matter to a man.”(OMS: 64) While having such type of pain still old man does not

loose temper and passion even has a lot of respect for fish rather than see fish as an enemy (Longman, 1980).

The old man said:

‘The fish is my friend too,’ he said aloud. ‘I have never seen or heard of such a fish. But I must kill him. I am glad we do not have to try to kill the stars.’(OMS: 56-57)

Even old man treats fish with full kindness as a human being and friend and has sympathy, he said:

I wonder what started him so suddenly. Could it have been hunger that made him desperate, or was he frightened by something in the night? Maybe suddenly felt fear. But he was such a clam, strong fish and he seemed so fearless and so confident. It is strange. (OMS: 64)

After long hours struggle old man finally got chance to see marlin and then feel himself fortunate to catch such a big fish. And felt relaxed. But suddenly unexpected another battle start when he saw:

The shark was not an accident. He had come up from deep down in the water as the dark cloud of blood had settled and dispersed in the mile-deep sea. He had come up so fast and absolutely without caution that he broke the surface of the blue water and was in the sun. (OMS: 77)

The old man sees shark coming and attacking on marlin and he immediately knows that sharks have no fear. The old man decides not to think but face the attacks when it comes. The shark sticks to the giant marlin fish as the old man attacks again and again before reaching home side. The old man is so tired with fight against the sharks that he can hardly breathe. He has a strange bitter taste in the mouth. He knows that he is finally beaten and that there is no remedy. When he reached home then has only giant marlin fish skeleton. He finally loses the battle he has won (Narasimhaiah, 1972).

Conclusion

On the basis of above discussion it can be said that Hemingway's hero; the old man is unique in all aspects and proves himself as a motivational hero for everyone. He set an example that, 'But man is not made for defeat, 'A man can be destroyed but not defeated.' (OMS: 80) He is physically exhausted, but mentally he is always hopeful. He faced hardships of life and battle against fish with bravery and has faced his defeat and loss with dignity because at last he has nothing but having sense to fight the battle with full heart with maintaining kindness and humanity (Longman, 1980).

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